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## **CLAIMS**

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1	1. An audio/video system, comprising:
2	a local area network having a data network, a control bus, and a plurality of
3	nodes;
4	a plurality of audio/video appliances each having available audio/video
5	presentations, said audio/video appliances respectively operatively connected to said plural
6	nodes for transmitting information about the available audio/video presentations to said local
7	area network;
8	at least one audio/video output unit for outputting audio/video signals;
9	a control unit having a control program and a memory which stores the
10	information about the audio/video presentations transmitted by said audio/video appliances;
11 .	an operating unit connected to said control unit; and
12	a visual output unit operatively arranged for displaying the information about th
13	available audio/video presentations independently of the audio/video appliances and dividing
14	the information into classes.
1	7 The audio/video system of claim 1 wherein each class includes at least one

2. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein each class includes at least one subclass and wherein said audio/visual output unit displays the classes, the subclasses for a selected class and names for ones of said audio/video presentations in a selected class and subclass.

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1	3. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said operating unit comprises
2	means for selecting a selected one of the available audio/video presentations independently of
3	the appliances and means for automatically retrieving the selected one of the available
4	audio/video presentations using said control unit.

- 4. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said at least one audio/video output unit further comprising a plurality of audio/video output units for outputting audio/video signals.
  - 5. The audio/video system of claim 4, wherein said operating unit comprises means for selecting one of said plural audio/visual output units.
  - 6. The audio/video system of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of operating units connected to said control unit.
  - 7. The audio/video system of claim 6, wherein each of said plural operating units is assigned a priority.
- 8. The audio/video system of claim 7, wherein a selection made using one of said plural operating units having a relatively high priority is prevented from being modified by another operating unit having a lower priority.
- 9. The audio/video system of claim 3, wherein said control unit is operatively arranged for assigning a priority to each of said plural audio/video appliances.

comprises a home multimedia system.



	1	10. The audio/video system of claim 9, wherein at least two of said plural
_	2	audio/video appliances have the selected one of the available audio/video presentations and said
	3	control unit comprises means for connecting the one of said at least two of said plural
	4	audio/video appliances having the highest priority to said at least one audio/video output unit.
	1	11. The audio/video system of claim 3, wherein said control unit comprises
	2	means for reducing a volume when the selected one of the available audio/video presentations
	3	is changed.
	1	12. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said operating unit comprises a
	2	start playback function, a stop playback function and a change volume function.
	1	13. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said local area network
	2	comprises an optical ring network.
	1	14. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said audio/video system is in a
	2	motor vehicle.
	1	15. The audio/video system of claim 14, wherein at least one of said plural
	2	audio/video appliances is operatively arranged for reading map data for a navigation system.
	1	16. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said audio/video system



comprises a plurality of service modules.



1	17. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein one of said classes comprises
2	radio and TV stations.
1	18. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein one of said classes comprises a
2	type of audio/video presentations.
1	19. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein one of said classes comprises
2	music titles.
1	20. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein one of said classes is for
2	information which is not continuously available.
1	21. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein an audio/video presentation is
2	assigned to a plurality of classifications.
1	22. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said local area network
2	comprises an open system.
1	23. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein wherein said control unit
2	comprises virtual interfaces for each of said plural audio/video appliances.
1	24. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said control program



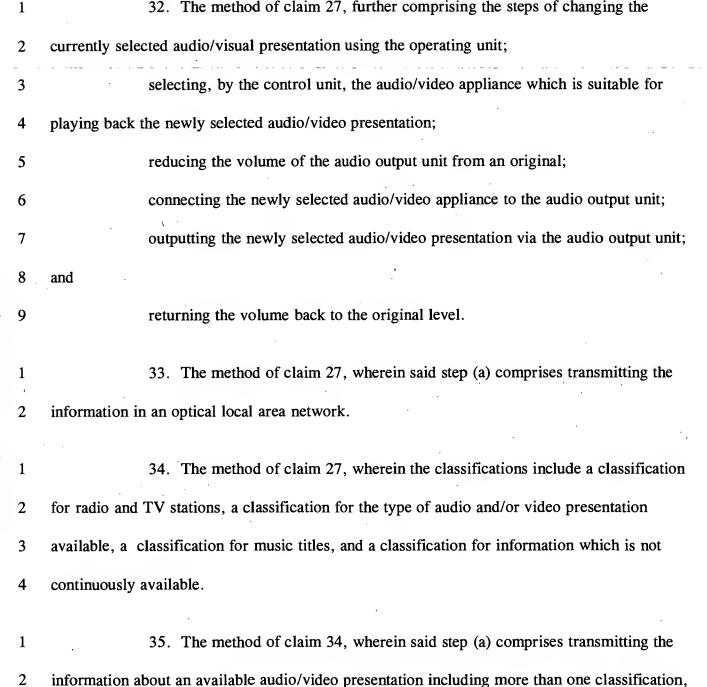
1	25. The audio/video system of claim 24, wherein said plural service modules
2	comprise:
3	a first service module for selecting a suitable audio/video appliance for playing
4	back the selected audio/video presentation;
5	a second service module for selecting and managing said at least one output unit
6	a third service module for connecting the network's node addresses stipulated by
7	the selections of the first and second service modules; and
8	a fourth service module which requests the functions of said first, second, and
9	third service modules.
1	26. The audio/video system of claim 1, wherein said control program
2	comprises a registration module for registering newly connected audio/video appliances.
1	27. A method for operating a local multimedia system having a plurality of
2	audio/video appliances, including the steps of:
3	(a) transmitting information about available audio/video presentations from
4	the audio/video appliances to a control unit, the information including one or more
5	classifications of the audio/video presentations;
6	(b) processing the information about the available audio/video presentations
7	into classes using the classifications independently of the appliances;
8	(c) outputting the information about the available audio/video presentations
9	which has been processed into classes independently of the appliances onto a visual output unit

priority.

10	(d) selecting an audio/video appliance which is suitable for playing back a
11	selected audio/video presentation;
12	(e) connecting the selected audio/video appliance to an output unit; and
13	(f) playing back the selected audio/video presentation via the output unit.
1	28. The method of claim 27, wherein said step (a) comprises transmitting a
2	classification, a subclass and a name by the audio/video appliances as information about the
3	available audio/video presentation.
1	29. The method of claim 27, wherein said step (e) comprises selecting a
2	selected audio/video output unit from a plurality of available audio video output units using the
3	operating unit and connecting the selected audio/video output unit to the audio/video appliance
4	selected in said step (d) by the control unit.
1	30. The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of assigning a priority
2	to each of the operating units, and modifying a selection made using a first operating unit with
3	a first priority only if it is done using an operating unit with the same or higher priority.
1	31. The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of assigning priorities
2	to the audio/video appliances and said step (d) comprises selecting, by the control unit, the
3	audio/video appliance with the selected audio/video presentation and which has the highest

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one classifications.



32. The method of claim 27, further comprising the steps of changing the

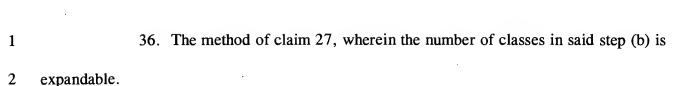
and allocating the audio/video presentation to more than one class on the basis of the more than

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- 1 37. The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of connecting the audio/video appliances and the control unit by virtual interfaces before said step (a).
- 1 38. The method of claim 27, wherein said step (a) comprises transmitting the information to the control unit which includes a control program having a plurality of service modules.
  - 39. The method of claim 38, wherein said step (d) comprises selecting a suitable audio/video appliance for playing back the selected audio/video presentation by a first service module of the control program.
  - 40. The method of claim 39, wherein wherein said step (e) comprises selecting the output unit managing the output unit by a second service module.
- 41. The method of claim 40, further comprising the step of connecting the audio/video appliance selected by the first service module and the output unit selected by the second service module by a third service module.
- 1 42. The method of claim 41, further comprising the step of requesting services 2 of the first, second, and third service modules by a fourth service module.

- 1 43. The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of automatically
- 2 registering a newly introduced audio/video appliance newly introduced into the multimedia
- 3 system in a registration module.